

Summary of Proposed Changes to MFT Licensing Requirements

For persons who begin graduate study on or after August 1, 2012:

- Increases the degree's total unit requirement from 48 to 60 semester units (72 to 90 quarter units).
- Provides more flexibility in the curriculum requirements, such as fewer requirements for specific hours or units for particular coursework, to allow for innovation in curriculum design.
- Changes to practicum including:
 - An additional 75 client contact hours, which may include client centered advocacy
 - Training in the applied use of theory, working with families, documentation skills, and how to find and use resources.
 - Student must be enrolled in a practicum course while seeing clients.
- Requires certain coursework, such as California law and ethics and child abuse assessment and reporting, which are currently required prior to licensure (and may be taken outside of the degree program) to instead be completed prior to registration as an intern and within the degree program.
- Infuses the culture and norms of public mental health work and principles of the Mental Health Services Act throughout the curriculum, including the following:
 - Recovery oriented care and related methods of service delivery
 - Providing opportunities to meet with consumers and family members
 - Greater emphasis on culture throughout the degree program
 - Greater understanding of the impact of socioeconomic position
- Adds instruction in areas needed for practice in a public mental health environment which may be provided in credit level coursework or through extension programs, including the following:
 - Case management
 - Working with the severely mentally ill
 - Collaborative treatment
 - Disaster and trauma response
- Degree program content to include instruction in:
 - Evidence based and best practices
 - End-of-life and grief
 - Co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders
 - Behavioral addiction
 - Psychosexual dysfunction
 - Differences in legal and ethical standards for different types of work settings
 - Licensing law and licensing process
- Changes the requirements for persons who earned a degree outside of California effective January 1, 2014, including accepting education as substantially equivalent when all of the following are true:
 - 1) The applicant's degree meets the following minimum requirements:
 - a) 48 semester units (72 quarter units)
 - b) 6 semester units (9 quarter units)
 - c) 150 practicum hours of face-to-face counseling
 - d) 12 semester units (18 quarter units) in MFT content
 - 2) The applicant remediates any deficiencies in content or units
 - 3) The applicant completes credit level coursework in the following areas:

- a) Recovery oriented care
- b) California cultures
- c) Social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position
- d) Meeting with consumers and family members
- e) Behavioral addition
- f) Co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders
- g) California law and ethics

This legislation also:

- Permits applicants to count experience for performing “client centered advocacy” activities toward licensure.
- Permits MFT interns to gain a portion of the required supervision via teleconferencing.
- Requires applicants for MFT licensure to verify that supervised experience was gained as an employee or volunteer and not as an independent contractor.
- Effective January 1, 2014, no longer requires an applicant licensed as an MFT for less than two years in another state to complete 250 hours in California as an intern.